

14th World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students  
July 27 to August 6, 1997

## **FESTIVAL ORGANIZING UPDATE**

Throughout the country young people and students are making plans to participate in the 14th World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students to be held in Cuba this summer. Momentum is building as local organizing committees are reaching out to young people in over three dozen cities and national organizations are getting the word out through their own networks. While it is still too early to predict numbers, we are expecting to send a large delegation and one that is rich in its diversity.

Participants from the U.S. will join at least 5,000 other young people from around the world. Committees are working in over 50 countries and it is expected that people will join the Festival from almost 100 different nations. The realities and potential of the global youth and student movements will blossom in this international gathering.

In Cuba, plans to host this historic gathering are well under way, with every organization and agency on the island lending support. Preparing for an event of this scale is never easy and in the context of Cuba's continued struggle to strengthen its weakened economy this undertaking takes on even greater significance. Cuba's commitment to this effort is yet one more example of that nation's deep sense of international solidarity and its belief in young people.

### **FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES**

Participants in our delegation will receive detailed information about the Festival's program as part of the orientation process. Some of the features of the nine days of activities include:

1) Discussion groups where young people from different constituency groups can share their experiences, such as trade unionists, artists, rural youth, religious believers, etc.

### **Important Announcement**

**Meeting of the U.S. Organizing  
Committee for the World  
Youth Festival  
Sunday, May 4th  
New York City  
12 noon to 3 p.m.  
Casa de las Americas  
104 West 14th Street (near 6th Ave.)**

Representatives of the many national and local groups working on our delegation will review the outreach and organizing efforts, travel and other logistical details, as well as plans for the activities of the Festival.

2) Workshops and discussion groups organized around the following themes:

Peace, security, nuclear weapon-free world & international cooperation & friendship.  
Anti-imperialist struggle, solidarity, national liberation, sovereignty & self-determination.  
Democracy & participation  
Environment & sustainable development  
Employment  
Education, science and technology  
Childhood  
Young women  
Health  
Culture and social communication  
Discrimination, racism and neo-fascism  
International youth and student movements  
Human rights and peoples' rights

3) A "Friendship Fair" where people from around the world will display the crafts, posters, videos, books and other cultural expressions from their own countries.

4) Regional Clubs or Centers where the delegations will offer presentations of the music, dance and other traditions of their nations. These will also be places for exchanges and discussion between delegates.

5) A full program of visits to places of interest in Cuba, including schools, research centers, health care facilities, factories, cultural centers and organizations and a number of historical sites.

6) Recreational and sports activities will be organized for delegates to participate in. There will also be plenty of parties and other social gatherings.

All Festival participants will stay in the homes of Cuban families and for three days delegates will divide up and go to one of the island's 14 provinces where cultural activities, political discussion and sports activities will continue.

The 14th World Festival will culminate on August 5th with a massive march in Havana and a celebration of Carnival.

## **PREPARING FOR THE FESTIVAL**

If you have not done so yet, now is the time to get an application and mail it to us. (See information below on the application and payment schedule.) As soon as your application comes in we will contact you about the next steps.

Local organizing committees are working on outreach and joint fund raising, and they will be putting together the orientation session for everyone going with us. *We will make sure that you are in touch with the committee closest to you.*

Everyone participating will need to have a valid passport. If you do not have one we encourage you to apply for one now and not wait. As the summer months approach the passport offices become much busier and there is no need to put this off.

## **AGE**

The World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students is open to all people. We are though specifically encouraging the participation of people in their teen's and twenties. The Festival's program of activities is geared to young people and we believe that young people will get the most from the experience.

If you will be between the ages of 16 and 18 years old at the time of the Festival, your legal guardians will have to sign a form giving you permission to travel with us. If you will be under 16 years old you must either travel with a parent or legal guardian, or your legal guardians will have to sign a permission form as well as designate someone as your guardian for the duration of the trip.

After we receive your completed application we will send you any necessary forms for your legal guardians to complete. We will also help connect you with a local organizing committee which in turn can help make sure that a guardian is appointed, should that be necessary.

## **APPLICATION & PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

The cost for participants in the U.S. delegation is \$600, although late applicants will be charged an additional \$25. (See payment schedule below.)

This includes all of the following:

- full program of activities in Cuba
- all meals and lodging
- transportation within Cuba
- Cuban visa
- round trip air fare between a departure city (either Cancun, Mexico or Nassau, the Bahamas) and Havana

The \$600 does not include the following:

- round trip air fare from your home city to the departure city
- spending money for such things as souvenirs, drinks or snacks, etc.

**A \$50 non-refundable deposit is required with all applications. Send in your completed application and deposit as soon as possible.**

Applications in by May 15th will be charged \$800, although full payment is not be due until June 30th.

Applications which come in between May 16th and June 30th will be charged an additional \$25.

There is no additional charge for license applications. (See below.)

*We cannot guarantee participation in the delegation to anyone who applies after June 30th.*

### **TRAVEL OPTIONS**

The U.S. government restricts the right of people in this country to travel to Cuba. There are several categories of travel for which the U.S. government issues licenses. At the same time, many people travel to Cuba from this country each year without a license.

The U.S. Organizing Committee for the World Youth Festival is coordinating travel arrangements for everyone participating in the delegation from this country. This includes offering you two options for your travel. On the application form you will be asked to indicate which option you want. Based on what you indicate you will get more information about how to proceed.

a) One of the categories for licensed travel is for people attending an international conference being held in Cuba and organized by an international organization with a history of such activities. The 14th World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students meets those criteria.

If you are interested in applying for a license, we will help in every way possible and work with you to get a license. The details on all of this will be sent to you as soon as we receive your completed application form. Also, even though you may meet the criteria for a license, there is no guarantee that the Treasury Dept. will issue it. Should that happen we will help you decide on other travel options.

b) The second possibility for your travel is to go without a license. There are some legal risks involved in this option. As far as we know, to date there have been perhaps a dozen cases where the U.S. government has fined people after they made a trip to Cuba without a license.

You must make a decision about which travel option you want, we cannot make that decision for you. *Whichever option you select, we will work with you throughout the entire process to insure a safe journey.* In addition to our experiences in organizing many delegations to Cuba, we are working with a team of lawyers who are available to help out should they be needed.

If you have any questions about the Festival, the delegation we are organizing, travel issues or anything else please contact us right away.

**U.S. ORGANIZING COMMITTEE  
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